

Rainbow Digest October 2025

400+ activists were in Vilnius for a space of inspiration and connection to face forward

[Newsletter](#)

The ILGA-Europe Annual Conference 2025 took place in Vilnius with conversations on connection, resilience, and the future of our movement



Alongside our local hosts, Lithuanian Gay League and Tolerant Youth Association, we brought activists and allies from across Europe and Central Asia together for a much needed gathering of our movement as we discussed, worked together and strategised the way forward in uncertain times.

We had over 70 different sessions, including workshops and inspiration spaces, self-organised sessions, connecting spaces, social events, and many more empowering and thoughtful moments.

Throughout 4 days, activists and organisations explored what it means to defend democracy, build power through challenges, and strengthen our movement in the face of global change.

[Read more.](#)

Watershed moment as Council of Europe sets first standard protecting intersex rights

The Council of Europe's 46 Member States have unanimously adopted the Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on Equal Rights for Intersex Persons, setting out the most comprehensive framework to date for protecting the human rights of intersex people across Europe.

OII Europe and ILGA-Europe highly welcome the Recommendation which establishes a new gold standard in Europe.



The Council of Europe launched the new Recommendations on 27 October at a high-level event in Strasbourg. The launch also opened the #EuropeGoesPurple campaign, a joint initiative with OII Europe running from 26 October to 8 November.

“The Recommendation is both groundbreaking and long overdue. By adopting it, Member States of the Council of Europe commit to addressing the critical gaps in rights protections faced by intersex persons. We will work closely with signatory States and LGBTI organisations across the region to ensure these gaps are closed and that the Recommendation is fully and effectively implemented.”

Chaber, Executive Director of ILGA-Europe

[Read more.](#)

Latest news

EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

EU publishes new LGBTIQ+ Equality Strategy, but is it fit for purpose?

The second EU LGBTIQ+ Equality Strategy for 2026-2030 was published on 8 October, but as we welcome it, the strategy clearly falls behind the ambition of the first EU LGBTIQ Equality Strategy.

“Is this strategy robust enough to meet the growing threats faced by LGBTI people across the EU? And why has the EU given up wanting to be at the forefront of defending LGBTI rights at a time when it is more needed than ever?”

Katrin Hugendubel, ILGA-Europe's Advocacy Director

[Find out more.](#)

The crackdown on LGBTI people in Turkey drastically intensified with new draft regulations

The draft upcoming 11th Judicial Package threatens to reintroduce mandatory sterilisation for legal gender recognition and raise the age limit from 18 to 25. The proposals would imprison those who carry out or receive gender reassignment surgery, as well as anyone who “engages in attitudes or behaviours contrary to biological sex and general morality,” or who promotes, encourages, or praises such behaviours. This comes amid a broader pattern of repression, as the government continues to target human rights defenders and further restrict LGBTI lives across the country.

[Read more.](#)

Albanian Parliament to discuss amendments to the Gender Equality Law

The government had prepared amendments to the Law on Gender Equality and Society to align with EU standards. But the opposition has now proposed changes that would make legal gender recognition almost impossible by defining sex as only “biologically immutable” male and female.

[Read more.](#)

Civil society urges EU to take action against Slovakia

Along with 56 civil society organisations, ILGA-Europe have co-signed a joint letter to European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and Justice Commissioner Michael McGrath calling for strong and urgent action against Slovakia's recently adopted constitutional amendments.

[Read more.](#)

FAMILY

Lithuania faces a defining moment for family equality

Following landmark judicial rulings, civil partnership is now firmly on the national political agenda in Lithuania and the question has shifted from whether to regulate partnership to how. LGBTI activists urge the lawmakers to ensure that any partnership legislation adopted fully reflects constitutional values and European human rights standards.

[Read more.](#)

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

Pride in Pécs in Hungary went ahead despite a ban

Despite a police ban upheld by Hungary's Supreme Court, thousands marched for equality at Pécs Pride on 4 October.

We stand in full solidarity with the organisers and every person who will turn out to march. Their courage shows the strength of Hungary's LGBTI community in defending fundamental rights against state repression.

[Read our timeline tracking the Hungarian Assembly Act.](#)

POLICE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

Police in Turkmenistan conducts raids against LGBT people

According to Radio Azatlyk, Turkmenistan's police and Ministry of National Security have launched a campaign against LGBT people. The officers in Turkmenabat and Ashgabat are trying to identify members of the group.

[Read more.](#)

Notice board

- IGLYO published a new report documenting LGBTQI young people's lived experiences in school and community-based sports. [Read more and download your own copy.](#)
- The Global Forum on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in Childhood and Adolescence will take place at Utrecht University, the Netherlands, on 17-19 August 2026. [You can send your submissions until November 6, 2025.](#)
- International Trans Fund opened applications for their funding cycle for trans-led organisations. [Apply by](#)

[1 December.](#)

- The European Forum of LGBTI+ Christian Groups released the second edition of their Rainbow Index of Churches in Europe. [Discover the results and the report.](#)
- The European Institute for Gender Equality is looking for an Expert on gender equality for The Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance that provides financial support to pre-accession countries. [Apply before 20 November.](#)
- BI+ Equal held their first conference and general meeting between 20-22 October that established the organisation. [Find out more.](#)